The Pagan Library

Courtesan

Sara Ellen Shank

No common whore, I.
I am a true lady of the night,
of the morning, of the afternoon,
of any time I choose.
Of any man I choose.
I do not sell my body,
whatever may be said,
would never sell it.
For it is a thing of round, lush beauty,
And a work of natural art.
Unlike a painting, it is not spoiled by touch,
but rather improved by it.
So if I choose to allow men entrance
to my private gallery to admire it,
hold it, kiss and caress it,
derive as much pleasure from it as I do,
Hell, maybe take a few pictures, why not?
Why should I feel shame?
I am, after all, a goddess.
Why should I not allow
these sacred rites in my most holy temple?
For a small donation of my altar,
I offer the world's greatest mystery.
I offer desire.
I am the eternally beckoning,
eternally elusive Siren.
I have had many names-
Venus, Epona, Gaia, Freyja, Fand...
But before all these, I was Woman,
Spreading my dark, starry wings in the night.

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God, in creating man, somewhat overestimated his ability.

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